The Offices of the Messiah.

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE

OF A

DISCOURSE

Delivered in

Haverford-West in *South-Wales*,

In the YEAR 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK.

Consider the Apostle and High-priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus, HEB. iii. 1.

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with Power, who went about doing Good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, ACTS x. 38.

He preached the Kingdom of God, for therefore was he sent, LUKE iv. 43.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

Luke iv. 18, 19.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the Poor, he hath ſent me to heal the Broken-hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and recovering of Sight to the Blind, to ſet at Liberty them that are bruiſed, to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord.

THIS was that Portion of Scripture our *Saviour* choſe for his Text when he preached at *Nazareth* on a certain Sabbath-day, not long after his Baptiſm in *Jordan*; and when he had read it in the Synagogue he cloſed the Book and ſat down, and ſaid, *This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears*, and all wondered at the gracious Words which he ſpake, *and the Eyes of all in the Synagogue were faſtened on him*; but before he had done ſpeaking, his own Doctrine was verified in himſelf, namely, *that a Prophet is not without Honour but in his own Country and among his own Kindred*; for they were offended with his Doctrine, and thruſt him out of their Synagogue, and attempted to kill him, but he eſcaped through the midſt of them and went away.

I ſhall not now make Obſervations on what offended the *Nazareens* in our *Lord*'s Diſcourſe, nor ſpeak of his early Perſecutions, and how he uſed his Divine Power in diſappearing from among them that ſought to deſtroy him, for this would take up that Time which I would rather ſpend in treating of his bleſſed Offices in the World. This ſhall always be to me a favourite Subject, as longs as I am his Servant, and permitted to labour in his Vineyard.

It is certain *Iſaiah*, out of whoſe Prophecy *Jeſus* read, ſpake thoſe Things not of himſelf but of the *Redeemer*, ſince he has appropriated them to himſelf, and which Things are the Teſtimony of all the inſpired Writers concerning him.

Our *Saviour* would read in the Scripture, to teach us they were *the true Sayings of God*, and that we might not be tempted to diſeſteem or ſlight the Law and the Prophets. He often mentions Paſſages out of the *Bible* himſelf, and bid ſuch as wanted to be ſatisfied concerning him, *ſearch the Scriptures*, confeſſing at the ſame Time, *theſe are they that teſtify of me*. He alſo blames the *Sadduces*, becauſe they were ignorant of the Scriptures, and urges no greater Reaſon in his Anſwers to the *Tempter* than that *it was written*. He was, no doubt, the *God* of Wiſdom, and could eaſily have baffled *Satan* with the ſtrongeſt Arguments, but he choſe only to ſay, *it is written*, and referred to the holy Writings as to the *Words of God*; nor could the *Enemy* with all his Temptations ſtand againſt the Simplicity of our *Saviour*. In this Reſpect *he has left us an Example that we ſhould follow his Footſteps*, when *Satan* or carnal Men would reaſon with us. If they would oppoſe the *Godhead of our Saviour*, our Anſwer muſt be, *How readeſt thou? It is written, He is over all*

God

God bleſſed for evermore. Or ſhould they deſpiſe *Free Juſtification, the Gift of the Spirit, the Knowledge of our Salvation, the Aſſurance of Faith, Chriſt's dwelling in us and manifeſting himſelf to us*, we muſt appeal to the Scriptures, for ſo *it is written*; and when meek Arguments from the *Oracles of God* and our *Saviour's* own Words are not likely to prevail, we may not uſe other Wiſdom, or hope to ſucceed by any other Weapon; this is the *Sword of the Spirit*, and *if Men hear not Moſes and the Prophets, neither would they be perſuaded tho' one roſe from the Dead.*

Chriſtians are Perſons who have received *Jeſus Chriſt* for their *God*, and are called by his Name in the World; his Word decides all Controverſies with them, and is believed though it contradicts the Maxims of the Philoſophers, and oppoſes the Sciences of the Schools; and therefore his Diſciples, the *true Chriſtians* in all Ages and Countries, think not, if ſuch Doctrines are probable? or if that Declaration of *Jeſus*, or this Promiſe can be poſſible? but ſimply and implicitly they believe him in all Things, and judge not after the Sight of their Eyes, or after the Hearing of their Ears, but follow his Word through thick and thin, through evil Report and good Report, and venture all they have eternally upon his Word. In this Matter our *Saviour* proves and tries his Children, for none of his Doctrines are of the World, nor were calculated to pleaſe Men. But ſome point blank oppoſe the common received Opinions of Men, and are only poſſible with *God*: ſuch are the Doctrines of his Divinity, and having *the whole Fulneſs of the Godhead in him bodily*, his Incarnation and being born of a Virgin, his Miracles in general, his Death, his Reſurrection, his meeting his Diſciples, and ſtanding perſonally and bodily among them, when the Doors were ſhut for fear of

the *Jews*, his Aſcenſion in a Cloud into Heaven, and his making himſelf known to and dwelling with us.

But though our *Saviour*'s Doctrines do ſo far ſurpaſs natural Conceptions, and tranſcend all human Reaſon and Knowledge, yet has he not left his Children without the happieſt and moſt ſolid Certainty of Truth; for whoever believes his Doctrine *ſhall know if it be of God*, and ſhall have *the Witneſs in himſelf*, the *Holy Spirit* confirms our Faith and makes our Hearts *rejoice in believing with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*, we anticipate our Heaven here, and have here *the Evidence of Things unſeen*.

It is well, for other Reaſons, that we have the Scriptures, for elſe long ago the Doctrines there taught had been loſt in whole Countries, and the heatheniſh Religion of Nature had uſurped the Place, ſo that if Men enlightened from Heaven ſhould have come and preached, even in ſuch an Age as ours, the Forgiveneſs of Sins thro' Faith and the comfortable Doctrine of the *Holy Ghoſt*'s Inſpiration, the Men of this Generation would have been ready to condemn ſuch Preachers, and think, *Ye bring ſtrange Things to our Ears*; and ſhould they venture to ſay, *We are Witneſſes of theſe Things*, we have got Pardon of our Sins, and have found *Jeſus* and eternal Life, they would be ready to ſtone them for Blaſphemy and Preſumption. But now the Scriptures are in the World, the Ambaſſadors of the *Lord* may appeal to them chearfully, and there prove to all Men, that ſo the Apoſtles and Prophets believed and taught, and ſo it is written, and this is their ſpiritual Weapon in the midſt of an adulterous and gainſaying People. It is an unſpeakable Mercy we have the Scriptures, and I blame ſuch exceedingly who take away that Key of Knowledge from the

People.

People. It is a needleſs Fear that ignorant and unlearned Men and Women would miſconſtrue it, and begin Sects and create Schiſms in the Church; ſuch have not done it, but the Subtile and wiſe Scholars, the Learned, and ſuch as have atheiſtically ſcorned to believe in *Jeſus*, and who have preferred human Wiſdom too much, and neglected the teaching of the *Holy Spirit*; theſe have made the Breaches, and been the Authors of the dangerous Sects, theſe have ruſhed into Ruin and drawn Diſciples after them; and therefore *only* becauſe *the Word of God* was not their Lanthorn, nor a Light to their Feet, but they choſe another Way.

Ye know my dear Brethren, how many Promiſes are made to thoſe who keep our *Saviour*'s Words, *they ſhall not taſte of Death, and he will keep them in the Day which ſhall try all them that dwell upon the Earth*; therefore, and becauſe our *Saviour* ſo read and ſpake out of the Scriptures, let us prize them, and be deaf as the *deaf Adder* to all Doctrines that glorify not our *Lord Chriſt*, and which are not written nor have their Foundation in the *Scriptures of Truth*. Let us reſt upon their Veracity till *Jeſus* comes, who will not ſuffer *one Jot or Tittle to paſs away till all is fulfilled*.

So much ſeemed needful to ſay on this Head; I will now proceed to ſpeak of the Text in Order.

It begins, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*. All the Children of *God* have of the *Spirit* in meaſure, but *Jeſus* had it without meaſure, even in his Manhood, of which it is here ſpoken, the *Holy Ghoſt* in Fulneſs deſcended and reſted upon the *Holy Child Jeſus*, and qualified him for his great Work. In his human Nature he was weak, and weaker than any Man, he being only *the Seed of a Woman*, and in his Fleſh he was capable of ſuffering, being tempted,

grieved, and as liable to all Weakneſſes and Hindrances as we are: *He was like us in all Things, Sin only excepted*, therefore was he anointed with the Fulneſs of the *Spirit* to be the Prophet, King, and Prieſt of his People. Hence he is called *The Chriſt, The Meſſiah, The Lord's Anointed*; for in reſpect of his humbling himſelf and taking the Place of *Mediator*, being a Man, and putting himſelf in the Place of *Adam*, *he was lower than the Father*, and indeed *a little lower than the Angels*, the Miniſter and Servant of all, whoſe Office and Service was to reſtore fallen Mankind, to do *God*'s Work, heal the Breach Sin had made, and ſet to rights the ruined Creation, waſhing and ſaving the Souls in his Blood, and bringing to them Salvation. For this his *dear Father* ſpared and ſent him, and for this he meekly and willingly came into the World; this the lowly and gracious *Lamb* confeſſes when he ſays, *He hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the Poor*; it was the principle End of his Humiliation to let the *Poor* know that there was Mercy for them. He was made Man and anointed for this Embaſſy; it was the glorious Errand he had in the World, the chief Meſſage he had to bring from the Throne of his *Father* and from the *ſacred Trinity*, that the *Holy One* from on high had beheld their Poverty and ſent them Redemption, that they were beloved in Heaven, and that *God* who made them, and from whom they had wandered and gone aſtray, *had ſeen their Affliction and was come down to deliver them.* This was the glad Tidings the *Servant of the Lord* brought to his periſhing World, and for this he, who was *God* from everlaſting, and the Creator and Maker of all, when he had contrived the amazing Scheme, and the due Time was commenced, bowed the Heavens and was incarnate, ſtooped to carry the

News

News himſelf, as well as to pay the Ranſom of his enſlaved and captive Creatures, and willingly offered himſelf to take the Servant's Place, ſaying, *In the Body that thou haſt prepared me, lo! I come to do thy Will O God.*

Daniel foreſaw who the *Meſſiah* ſhould be, and what Perſon ſhould be the Finiſher of Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin, and who ſhould make Reconciliation by being cut off and ſlain, and bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs, and therefore ſpeaks of anointing *the Moſt Holy.*

None of the Angels might announce the Counſel of *Jehovah* in this Matter till the Prince of their Hoſts appeared in Fleſh, and to the *Poor* was the Goſpel firſt to be preached. The *Poor* are the miſerable Part of Mankind, the Friendleſs, the Dejected, the Helpleſs, ſuch as are apprized of their loſt Eſtate, and who are unhappy, who cannot take up with the World, or be ſatisfied with their good Things, but who ſigh and mourn in ſecret, who know and feel their Impotency, Sin, and Unworthineſs, and who don't know how to be ſaved out of their Danger; their Thoughts are, *of all Men I am the moſt miſerable.* Theſe firſt and more immediately are the Objects of the *Lord*'s Charity, and though all are poor but inſenſible of it, yet theſe are ſenſible of it, and their Extremity and Poverty has been the Cauſe of *Chriſt Jeſus*'s coming to help them. They are the highly favoured of the *Lord*, and muſt hear how dear they are to him that made them, and what his Deſigns are concerning them, namely, to love them with everlaſting Love, and to enrich them with the Kingdom of Heaven, and make them Poſſeſſors of the World to come. This is eaſily obſerved throughout the Scriptures, as well in our *Saviour*'s Sermon upon the Mount as in the

Courſe

Courſe of all his Preaching, that *the Poor have the Goſpel preached to them.* And to *the Poor in Spirit, the ſpiritually Poor*, how glad News is this! To ſuch as were in a low Eſtate, and who were little, and baſe, and contemptible in their own Eyes, and who were ready to conclude that they were forſaken and juſtly abandoned by the *Lord*, and unworthy his Notice or Regard becauſe of their Sin, how ſweet muſt the Goſpel ſound when it is publiſhed before them, that ſuch may be ſaved, that the *Lord* has opened *a Well of Salvation* for ſuch to waſh in and be clean, that a Righteouſneſs is prepared and finiſhed to dreſs and cloath them for *the Wedding of the Lamb*, and that *Jeſus* had undertook for them, had paid their Ranſom-price, and had forgiven their Debt and Diſobedience, and was now their *Saviour?* This muſt revive their ſinking Spirits, and make their heavy and diſcouraged Hearts rejoice, juſt as good old *Jacob*'s Heart revived when he looked out of his Tent, and ſaw indeed the Chariots and Waggons *Joſeph* had ſent out of *Egypt* to fetch him, *O*, he ſaid, *it is true! Joſeph is yet alive, I will go and ſee him before I die*; ſo when the Report of the Goſpel is brought with Power to the Ears, and when *Jeſus* himſelf ſpeaks to the Heart, and brings it out to ſee what he has done for Sinners, and how he has prepared a Salvation for them, when he embraces the Soul and kiſſes it, and his ſoft ſtill Voice whiſpers Peace and inſpires Faith, though ſmall as a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, they revive, they receive the welcome Meſſage, and become the happieſt of all Creatures. As *Zaccheus*, the chief of the Publicans in *Jericho*, received him joyfully, ſo do they, and no condemned Criminal who ſtands ready to be executed with the Halter about his Neck, ſo rejoices to receive the King's

Pardon,

Pardon, no Priſoner is ſo glad to be releaſed from his Cell, no Slave is ſo tranſported to be ranſomed, as a poor Sinner to have *Jeſus* preach the Goſpel to his Heart, and aſſure him of his Favour. This is *Jeſu*'s Work and Office, this he muſt do himſelf, and though he ſends out Meſſengers with the ſame good News, they are like his Fiſhermen, when they toiled all Night but took Nothing, without him. It is his Voice that goes to the Heart; he is the only Preacher of everlaſting Life in the ſtricteſt Senſe, and *he was anointed to preach the Goſpel to the Poor*.

Another of his Offices is *to heal the Broken-hearted*. The Prophets who ſaw his Day afar off had called him the *Healer*, and ſaid, *he ſhould riſe with Healing under his Wings*, and this he preaches himſelf.

His great Intention is to create the World, the Heavens and Earth anew, to reſtore the decayed Places, and build up what is fallen down; but eſpecially he has Compaſſion upon the *Broken-hearted*, and muſt heal them, for therefore was he ſent. When he came to *Bethany* and ſaw the Grief and Tears of *Mary* and *Martha*, he was ſo touched that before all he wept too, and rather than ſee them bear their cutting Affliction, *Jeſus* called back their Brother and comforted them. Thus he did when, as he was entering into the City of *Nain*, he met the Corpſe of a young Man, the only Son of his Mother, who was a Widow, and weeping bitterly for her Child. The Woman was diſtreſſed, and her Heart broken with Grief at the Loſs of her only Son; her Soul refuſed Comfort. I ſuppoſe ſhe wiſhed often as *David* once did for *Abſalom*, *Would to God I had died for thee my Son!* She might think, *I am a poor diſconſolate and deſolate Widow, I had*

had but one to comfort me and he is removed, I have none left to care for me or to be a Comforter to me in my old Years. O call my Name Marah, *for the* Lord *has dealt bitterly by me, he has taken away all I had, and will bring down my grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave.* Thus mourned the childleſs Mother till ſhe approached the Grave where *Jeſus* met her. O how was his Heart affected, his tender Mercies could not let him ſuffer it, he ordered the Men that carried the Bier to ſtand ſtill, and ſaid to the poor Woman, *Weep not*; as if he would have ſaid, *O dear Woman I cannot bear thy Grief, I know Sin has been the Cauſe of all this; there had been no Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Death, had not Sin entered into the World, but I am come down to end it, I am ſent to heal the Broken-hearted, weep not, I will reſtore thee thy Son*; and he called him from the Dead, and gave him to his Mother. If our *Saviour* could be ſo deeply affected in ſuch Caſes, and pitied the over-grieved Children of Men when their Loſs was natural, and when only it concerned temporal Things, how much more think ye muſt he pity Souls whoſe Grief is intolerable about their Sin, and who are broken-hearted about their future State? He knows what Terrors can oppreſs a human Creature, he has been a Man, and has experienced it often, and thoroughly in the Wilderneſs, and that Night eſpecially when he was in ſuch Diſtreſs and Anguiſh that he ſunk down and trembled, walked to and fro in the Garden, and ſweat Blood being in an Agony, and when he cried out, *My God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken me!* His Pangs and Sorrows cure us, and *by his Stripes we are healed.* When he lays his bleeding Hand upon the Heart and ſays, *Peace, be ſtill*, all is healed, and the Hurt and Pain removed. Remember this when ye are troubled, and ye who know what a broken

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and contrite Heart is, for he will not deſpiſe it; offer it to him for a Sacrifice and he will help you, and be aſſured *he was ſent to heal the Broken-hearted.*

Another Part of our *Saviour*'s Office was *to preach Deliverance to the Captives.* He knew all were ſold and carried away Captive by the *Enemy*; all were his Bond-ſervants, and properly Slaves to *Satan and to Sin.* The Bondage in *Egypt* was but a Type of our ſpiritual Captivity, he therefore came to *open the Priſon Doors*, and to break in Pieces the Fetters of Iron and Braſs; but this he would do in Equity and Juſtice, therefore he became our Ranſom-price and was given for us; his own Blood was ſhed to buy us out of the *Enemy*'s Hand, and by bearing our Sins and Puniſhments he merited our Freedom. He *only* has the Power to bring a Soul out of *the Houſe of Bondage*, and deliver him into *the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*, and make him *free indeed.* No Sin can rule any longer when *Jeſus* has made him free; *Satan* no longer can lead them Captive at his Will, when our *Saviour* has commanded, *Let my People go that they may ſerve me.*

It is a falſe Doctrine, that we are bound to Sin as long as we live, and muſt ſometimes ſerve the old Maſter; this is *eſtabliſhing iniquity by a Law*; but if a Man had been wholly led and captivated by Luſt, or Drink, or Paſſion, or Covetouſneſs, or the World, or by any other Vice, let him apply to the *Deliverer* and he ſhall be ſet at Liberty. Our *Lord*'s Hands that were once bound with Chains and nailed upon the Croſs for him, ſhall unbind him and diſſolve his Bonds, *though he had made a League with Hell, and a Covenant with Death, it ſhould not ſtand, let him call upon the Name of the Lord and he ſhall be ſaved. He brings the Priſoner out of the Priſon-houſe*, and no Sin, no inbred Villainy and wickedneſs, no Guilt, no

Bonds of *Satan* can detain a Soul one Moment longer, when they believe in *Jesus*. All lose their Power and become like *Tow that has touched the Fire*. Before the Word of *Christ* all the strong Holds of *Satan* tremble, and every ones Bands are loosed. This every Believer has experienced; they know what Slavery they were once in, how unhappy they were under the Dominion of Sin till *the mighty God*, who made War with *Satan* and overcame, *preached Deliverance to them*, and assured their Hearts he had paid their Ransom, and was now *their Redeemer*. No one has a Right to free Debtors but the Creditor, and he who pays all for them, nor may any Man deliver the Slaves from the Gallies, or Plantations, or Place of Slavery but he that bought them. In this respect therefore has our *Lord Jesus* the Preheminence, for he is *Lord of all in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell*, and can free whom he will. He is the only Creditor, against him only have we sinned, and he only can frankly forgive us and acquit and release us; but this he is more ready to do than we to ask it. It is his Office, his Work, and Delight *to preach Deliverance to the Captives*, and to set them at Liberty. If therefore any are oppressed of the *Devil*, or find themselves chained and bound by Sin, turn to him as *Prisoners of Hope, look to him and be saved*.

Another Part of our *Saviour*'s Work was *to recover Sight to the Blind*. All our Stupidity and Ignorance in Divine Matters is called and esteemed *Blindness* in the Scripture, The *God of this World* has blinded all, and with all Propriety may it be said, *we were born Blind*. The blind Person is not more at a Loss to know what Light is, or to distinguish Colours, than a natural Man is to understand our *Saviour* and see his Salvation. This is a hard Doctrine to some, and especially to such as are knowing

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and gifted Men who have a philoſophical Genius; and alſo to religious Perſons who know the Letter of *the Law of God*, can diſtinguiſh between ſound and unſound Preaching, have adhered to the beſt Church, and profeſſed the beſt and moſt orthodox Syſtem of Faith and Religion, to tell theſe of their being blind would offend them as much as when our *Saviour* once told it to the ſtrict *Jews*, who angrily aſked him, *Are we blind alſo?* Our *Saviour* anſwered, *If ye were blind ye ſhould have no Sin, but becauſe ye ſay, we ſee, therefore your Sin remaineth. For Judgment I am come into the World, that they who ſee not might ſee, and thoſe that ſee might be made blind*, that is, *Jeſus* was come to open the Eyes of the Blind, and to enlighten thoſe that *had ſat in Darkneſs and in the Shadow of Death*, and to remove the Scales from their Eyes, as he did by St. *Paul*, that they might ſee *God* and his Salvation. But it is a melancholy Thing when People ſuppoſe they know enough, and can ſee already, and are yet Strangers to our *Saviour*, and whoſe Eyes were never anointed with his *Eye-ſalve*, neither did they ever come to him to receive their Sight. Theſe are thoſe *who love Darkneſs* and are of the *Laodicean* Stamp and Spirit, who boaſted *that they had need of nothing, and knew not that they were poor, and miſerable, and blind.* Such who proudly ſtand it out, and will have no other Illumination but Nature, no Light but Reaſon, receive no Benefit by the Goſpel; *Chriſt, the Light of the World*, is of no Service to them, they are only the more blind, and all their Wiſdom becomes a Curſe and a Snare to them, and their brighteſt Counſels are like the Counſel of *Achitophel*, Fooliſhneſs.

I believe all the gracious Acts of our *Lord*, in reſpect of his curing ſo many blind People in the Days

of his Fleſh, were written not only as a Hiſtory of his Deeds and Miracles, but that Souls ſenſible of their Blindneſs and Darkneſs might apply to him and be enlightened. Let them then who are ſpiritually blind tread in the Steps of *Bartimeus*, and others, let them ſit in the Way begging, and tho' they ſhould be perſuaded and charged by their prudent Friends, who are afraid of their being *righteous over-much*, to hold their Peace, and not make ſo much ado, yet let them cry ſo much the more, *Lord Jeſus! thou Son of David have Mercy upon me.* See only the aſtoniſhing Effect *Bartimeus*'s Prayers had upon the *Lord, he ſtood ſtill!* he could not proceed on his Journey till he had helped him, he called him to him and aſked him, *What wilt thou that I ſhould do unto thee?* and he anſwered, *Lord that I might receive my Sight*; *and Jeſus ſaid, receive thy Sight, thy Faith has ſaved thee, and he received his Sight and followed Jeſus in the way.* If you wiſh, *O that I knew the Road in which* Jeſus *would go, or could be ſo happy as* Bertimeus, *to know the Place where he would paſs by, I would beg like him, and not ceaſe till I had prevailed*; then know, as ſurely as *Jeſus* paſſed along the Road to *Jericho*, ſo ſurely is he preſent where *two or three are met in his Name*; go and ſit with them, and be aſſured *Jeſus* paſſes by: If you cannot ſee him, he ſees you and has Compaſſion on you. Speak to him and beg of him, as a Beggar intreats for an Alms; let neither Friends nor Foes prevent you to cry to him, till he has ſaid to you, *receive your Sight, your Faith has made you whole.* Thus has our *Saviour* done to many thouſands, and is come into the World on that Errand, *to preach recovering of Sight to the Blind.* He only ſaid in the beginning of the Creation, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, the ſame ſaid only to the blind Eyes *Ephatha*, and immediately they ſaw,

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let him only ſpeak the Word and you ſhall no longer walk in Darkneſs, but have the *Light of Life*. Many of thoſe who were healed by our *Saviour* could not relate diſtinctly how *Jeſus* did the Miracle, and neither did he work the ſame by all, but ſpat upon the Ground, and anointed one Man's Eyes, touched another's, and only ſpake to a third; but this all could ſay, *One Thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I ſee.* So ſome who have been converted and brought into marvellous Light by the Divine Occuliſt, and whoſe blind Eyes his tender Mercy has opened, cannot always relate the direct manner of his Dealings with them, or tell as others, Step by Step, all his gracious Proceedings with them, but this all can affirm, *I know I was blind, I know I was in Darkneſs, and walked in Darkneſs once, I did not know whether I was going to Heaven or Hell, I was blind to my Part and Intereſt in the Lamb, I did not ſee him, I did not look upon him, I was blind but now I ſee; I ſee Jeſus, I ſee the Things that make for my Peace, mine Eyes have ſeen the Lord's Salvation; he has recovered my Sight, and I walk no longer in the Cloud and in Darkneſs, I know whither I am going, I am a Child of Light and of the Day, the Sun of Righteouſneſs is riſen upon me, the Lord himſelf is my Light and my Salvation, he is my Sun by Day and my Moon by Night, and my Light ſhall go down no more; God, my own God and Saviour, the Sun that went down in Clouds and Blood upon the Mount* Golgotha, *is my Light, and his Countenance, once covered with Shame and Spittle, is my everlaſting Brightneſs.*

Yet another Office of our *Saviour* was *to ſet at Liberty them that were bruiſed.* This is to releaſe Souls buffeted and hurried by *Satan*, to extricate the Tempted, and ſuch as are continually unſettled and unſafe thro' the Perſecution and Envy of the *Serpent*. There

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are ſome Souls of whom it may be ſaid properly *they are bruiſed*; they are ſore with Trials, and ſurrounded with numberleſs Temptations, but they have a Friend *who was tempted in all Points like them*, who will preach Deliverance to them, and ſet them at Liberty, ſo that the *Enemy* ſhall not approach to touch them and to do them Violence no more; theſe have been like Sheep driven from the Fold and worried up and down in the Wilderneſs by Beaſts of Prey, but *Jeſus* is their *Good Shepherd*, he ſays, *I will go after that which is driven away, I will bind up that which is torne, and heal that which is ſick, and I will bring them back and feed them in good Paſture.* There are ſome in the World pitiable indeed, ſore and bruiſed above meaſure, but to none is our *Saviour* more nigh and tender than to theſe; he pities them, and will ſurely lead them ſafe out of all Temptations, and be their Saviour out of all their Troubles; *he will comfort all that mourn*, they ſhall ſooner or later find him wipe away the Tears from their Eyes, and leave no Cauſe to complain or ſigh any more for ever. Are ye bruiſed? *tarry the Lord's Leiſure, be ſtrong and he ſhall comfort your Heart, only put you your Truſt in the Lord; tho' you ſow in Tears you ſhall reap in Joy, and tho' Heavineſs may endure for a Night Joy ſhall come in the Morning*; tho' you paſs thro' the Fire, and go thro' deep Waters that rage and ſwell againſt you, remember who has ſaid, *Ye ſhall not be burnt, neither ſhall the Waters ſwallow you up*; he will ſay one Day to you, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my Temptations, I alſo have appointed you to ſit down with me in my Kingdom, come in ye weary and heavy laden Souls, enter the Joy of your Lord!*

There is yet another Office of our *Saviour* to be treated of, and that is, *to publiſh the acceptable Year of the Lord.* There is *a Day of Grace, and an accepted*

Time

Time in which *God* is found, and wherein Salvation is tendered and offered, ſo long the Door of the Wedding Chamber is open, ſo long the Trumpet of Jubilee ſounds, and it is poſſible to let this Seaſon of Mercy ſlip and paſs over. This was the Caſe of the *Iſraelites* of old, *forty Years long was God grieved with them, and when they always erred in their Hearts and gave no Credence to his Word*, after he had ſaid, *To-day if ye will hear my Voice, he ſware that they ſhould not enter into his Reſt.* They were more thoughtful about the Onions and Garlick of *Egypt*, than to get the Vine-yards and Olive-yards of *Canaan*; they longed more to go back and get the Fleſh-pots and Herbs of the *Heathen* than the *Land flowing with Milk and Honey, wherefore God gave them up to their Luſts and they periſhed in the Wilderneſs.* Thus now many look after the Pleaſures and Vanities of the preſent Life, and deſpiſe the pleaſures at *God's Right Hand*; they are eager and a-thirſt for the Things of this World, to redeem them from which it has coſt the *Lord* ſo dearly, and *the true Land of Canaan, the Glory of all Lands, they ſlight*; all his tender Calls are of little Weight to them, the Price with which they were ranſomed and bought is ſlighted, and they let the *Day of Jubilee* paſs over, and ſo fall into the ſad Eſtate of *Jeruſalem*, over which our *Saviour* weeping ſaid, *O that thou hadſt known in this thy Day the Things that make for thy Peace, but now they are hid from thine Eyes.*

On the other Hand, many embrace the gracious Opportunity, and while it is called *To-day* lay hold on everlaſting Life, It is our *Saviour* who has the Honour to let the Soul hear, *Now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation!* O that he would preach it to all here, and give you chearfully and joyfully to betake yourſelves now to the Sanctuary and Hiding-

ding-place of his Wounds, that when *the Night comes when no Man can work*, ye may be ſafe in Refuge, and accepted for Sons and Daughters of the *Lord Almighty*.

The Day and Year of Grace is now come, the Goſpel is now preached, Salvation is now ſet before you, *all Things are ready*, let your Hearts alſo be ready, and enter in by *Jeſus*, ſo ſhall ye experience all his tender Mercies and Loving-kindneſs. Let your Eyes be faſtened on him, and your Ears attend to the gracious Words that proceed out of his Mouth, hear all he ſays, and abide with him; let him be *your Friend and Saviour*, let him be the Riches of your *poor Souls*, and preach Deliverance to you in your Captivity, let him open your Eyes and anoint them with his Tears and Blood, it is the beſt *Eye-ſalve*, let him heal your broken Hearts, and comfort you in all afflicting times. Get an Inſight into his Wounds and Stripes, learn to prize their Healing, and to them bring every Diſeaſe, and Pain, and Grief till you are entered into your *Lord*'s Joy. Sit down at his Feet, like *Mary*, and *hearken what he will ſay concerning you*. Attend upon him and he will preach to you, he will be your Miniſter, and ſecretly manifeſt to you his Love and Grace; *he will ſet you at Liberty* from all Trials, and find a way for you to eſcape in all Temptations, and be *your preſent Help in the Time of Trouble*. I have proved him and found him thus to me, and I heartily recommend you to him, that you alſo may be his Witneſſes, and rejoice in your *good Miniſter and Lord*, who is only worthy to receive Bleſſing, and Honour, and Glory for ever! *Amen!*

F I N I S.

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